



Tapu'itea

...ina ia manino le folauga.

Tuesday
June 20,
2006

OFFICIAL AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER Vol. I, No. 13

Governor Togiola Tulafono disappointed with UH Board of Regents decision to increase Pacific Islander tuition 150 percent

(HONOLULU) – Governor Togiola Tulafono, in Honolulu for meetings and preparing for the Pacific Basin Development summer meeting to be held on the island of Lanai, appeared before the University of Hawaii Board of Regents monthly meeting in Kapolei last Thursday to give testimony on why the Board should not raise school fees 50% for Pacific Islanders.

Governor Togiola urged the Board to delay any action on the tuition increase because the fee hike would mean that American Samoa students as well as other Pacific Islanders would pay out of state tuition that will double what they currently pay.

Governor Togiola did appeal to the Board of Regents to maintain the current arrangement because the existing structure in fees is an important link for all Pacific Islander students to attend the University of Hawaii at a reasonable cost.

"If this policy goes into effect, going to UH is going to be just as expensive as going to any other major university on the mainland U.S.," said Governor Togiola, who also wrote a follow up letter to Board Chairperson Ms Kitty Lagareta urging a deal on the increase. (Governor Togiola's letter to Ms Lagareta is included at the end of this press release.)

Despite eloquent pleas and passionate testimonies from more than two dozen individuals, that included Governor Togiola, the University of Hawaii Board of Regents approved last Thursday a 50 percent tuition increase for Pacific Island students. If treated as out of state students, and based on the existing arrangement, the actual increase for all Pacific Islanders would be 150%.

Governor Togiola said the Board action, which goes into effect in 2007, is a bitter pill to swallow for the Territory's UH-bound students.

"I am disappointed that the Board of Regents did not see fit to keep the tuition differential waiver for Pacific Islander students, and allowing them to pay 'resident' tuition for attending the University of Hawaii system," said Governor Togiola. "I still believe that our Pacific children should be entitled to that status in this institution. Although I did not mention it to the Board, they should be aware of the contribution of our Pacific and Samoan students to the success of the sports programs that bring money and well-deserved attention to the University. These are all important contributions that support the tax base that helps support the 'resident' tuition for resident students."

Governor Togiola said he was grateful and appreciative, however, the UH administration and the Board for their continuing concern about the future of Pacific Island students.

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Governor Togiola Tulafono asks Hawaiian Air to withdraw from Pago Pago-Honolulu route to make way for lower cost air service

(HONOLULU) – After many months of requesting to Hawaiian Airlines for a major reduction in air fare between Pago Pago and Honolulu that is comparable to a flight of similar duration and distance, such as Los Angeles and Honolulu, Governor Togiola Tulafono announced today that he has officially written to Hawaiian Airlines CEO & President Mark Dunkerley to say "it would now be best for Hawaiian Airlines to withdraw from the Honolulu to Pago Pago route to make way for a lower cost air service."

In Hawaii to attend the Pacific Basin Development Council summer meeting, the Governor Togiola in a seven page letter to Mr. Dunkerley dated June 19, 2006, said "our people have reached the point where their tolerance for this abuse is at an end."

"Too much unhappiness has been generated in our islands and occupied our lives over the way Hawaiian Air has conducted itself in recent years. The intransigence exhibited in response to our present effort to seek improvements, has now made it conclusively evident that we will have to force a major confrontation to accomplish any change," wrote Governor Togiola. "We have invited you to respond with lower charges, and you have not responded at all. The next step for this community is to seek a replacement air carrier to serve us with the lower costs- just the normal range of airfares that Americans everywhere pay for a ten hour round trip, whether from Coast to Coast across our mainland, or from the West Coast to Hawaii. Our people see these fares on their internet computers, and are outraged how Hawaiian has taken advantage of them."

Governor Togiola called his decision "a road upon which there is no retreat." He said for all concerned, it would now be best for Hawaiian Airlines to withdraw from the Honolulu to Pago Pago route to make way for a lower cost air service. Governor Togiola invited Hawaiian Air to withdraw now as the U.S. Department of Transportation already has in place a procedure for this change.

"You are mindful that the U.S. Department of Transportation requires Hawaiian Airlines to continue to serve American Samoa from Honolulu until a substitute carrier approved by DOT commences a replacement service," said Governor Togiola. "We will take care of organizing a substituted service with DOT. We hope your notice of withdrawal will be forthcoming."

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HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On June 16, 1899, "The high commissioners of the three powers, Bartlett Tripp (American), C.N.E. Eliot (British), and H. Sternberg (German)...made it 'unlawful for any person to sell, give, or otherwise dispose of, to any other person or persons, any spirituous, vinous, or intoxicating liquor of any kind, in the islands of Samoa outside the municipal district of Apia.' All offenders were to be sent, with witnesses, to Apia for trial by the chief justice."

On June 17, 1894, William Walter Phelps, a United States delegate at the International Congress on the Samoan Question, which met in Berlin in 1889, passed away in Englewood, Bergen County, New Jersey. He was the grandfather of American Samoa's first appointed civilian governor, Phelps Phelps.

On June 17, 1927, an article in the *Samoa Times* reported that New Zealand's Minister of External Affairs, William Nosworthy, had recommended that the Samoa Act of 1920 be amended to deport disaffected Europeans and *afakasi* (a threat clearly aimed at *Mau* members O.F. Nelson, Edwin Gurr and Alfred Smythe).

On June 18, 1888, Elder Joseph Henry Dean established the first branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints ("Mormon" church) at Leone, Tutuila.

On June 18, 1892, the U.S. Government purchased two unnumbered parcels of land for the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila listed as "Naval Station Proper" (also known as the "Sherwood Claim"), totalling 121 acres, from "Christopher Atwell Harris & James McFarlane" for \$1,460.00, and the "National Bank of New Zealand & Robert Thomas Chatfield, et ux" for \$290.00."

On June 18, 1943, the Seabees' 11th Construction Battalion was replaced by the 506th Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU), and moved to New Caledonia.

On June 18, 1947, the U.S. Secretaries of State (George C. Marshall), War (Kenneth C. Royall), Navy (James Forrestal) and Interior (Julius C. Krug) recommended to President Harry S. Truman that responsibility for American Samoa, Guam and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands be transferred from the Navy Department to the Department of the Interior at the earliest possible date.

On June 19, 1936, the Catholic church at Falefa, 'Upolu, Western Samoa, which had been in use for eleven years, was officially dedicated. The delay was "due to the 'great depression,' which frustrated financial life in Samoa during this period."

On June 19, 1945, at the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila, "all harbor [sono-buoy] detection personnel were declared available [for duty elsewhere], which closed the activity."

On June 20, 1854, Harry Jay Moors, businessman, author, editor, friend of Robert Louis Stevenson, and founder of Samoa's Moors family, was born in Detroit, Michigan.

On June 20, 1906, Commander Charles B.T. Moore, Governor of American Samoa, issued his "Regulation No. 4-1906: Protection of Pigeons and Doves." This edict was amended on January 3, 1910 by Governor John F. Parker and on May 10, 1921 by Governor Waldo Evans.

On June 20, 1927, in Apia, a policeman overheard *Mau* member Tamaseu Taifau telling a friend that the *Mau* would not obey the Government's orders, would not search for rhinoceros beetles, would not pay taxes, and would not attend district meetings. He was arrested, convicted of breaking the Maintenance of Authority Ordinance, and sent to jail for a year.

On June 20, 1936, New Zealand's Governor General, Viscount Galway, formally remitted the balance of Western Samoan *Mau* leader Olaf Nelson's exile, thus enabling him to return to Samoa.

Governor Togiola Tulafono disappointed with UH Board of Regents

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"The new policy does give recognition to the unique role of 'Pacific Islander' students going to school in the UH system, by adopting a program specially for Pacific students, including our own from American Samoa," said Governor Togiola. "Although the tuition is set to increase 150%, the Board of Regents have also approved the Pacific Islander Students scholarship to help defray the additional tuition resulting from the increase. If it works out as they say it will, the Pacific Island students will pay no more than what the "resident" students will. I hope, as I pointed out in my testimony, that the system will work as well as they claim. I am indeed worried about the lack of a single standard for applying the scholarship program, and we will be anxious to find out how well it may work."

Public Notice

In accordance with the ASCA 16.2002 and rule codified in sections 13.02002 and 13.0203 and 4.1005 (Rule #02-2006), the American Samoa Board of Higher Education and the American Samoa Community College wishes to inform the public that beginning the Fall term of 2006, the tuition flat rate currently charged to students will be eliminated.

The policy in the ASCC Catalog 2004-2006 (Pg. 64) would be amended as follows:

Tuition at the American Samoa Community College is \$45 per credit hour for residents and \$60 for per credit hour for non-resident students.

Interested persons may obtain information about tuition rates at the ASCC Office of the President from May 30th, 2006 to June 30th, 2006 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on regular workdays. The phone number is 699.8886 or 699.9155 ext. 350.

Also, written comments about these tuition rates can be submitted by facsimile to Dr. Adele Satele-Galea'i at 699.6259, email at p.morris@ascc.as, or by mail at American Samoa Community College, PO Box 2609, American Samoa 96799. The deadline for submission is 30 days of this notice.

Share important activities

with our ASG workforce as well as the citizens of American Samoa.

Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to:

tapuitea@amsamoa.gov.as

Deadline for submissions is Thursday @ noon.

Governor Togiola Tulafono asks Hawaiian Air to withdraw from Pago Pago-Honolulu route *(continued from page 1)*

"Indeed, in both your acts and in your written correspondence – the usual platitudes aside - you have clearly expressed your view that Hawaiian Airlines' service to American Samoa is a high cost nuisance," said Governor Togiola. "We have taken the same view. It is time to end this."

In his letter to Mr. Dunkerley, Governor Togiola restated the problems that American Samoa residents and citizens have experienced and continue to experience in air service between Honolulu and Pago Pago. The Governor cited the deceptions created by Mr. Dunkerley in recent correspondence in his attempts to dismiss the charges of discriminatory conduct the American Samoa Government has brought against the management of Hawaiian Airlines' monopoly air service on the Pago Pago/Honolulu route.

"At every other U.S. destination you serve, you charge \$250.00 for a reservation no-show. But at Pago Pago, American Samoa, also a U.S. destination, you charge \$350.00. This is discrimination," said Governor Togiola. "At every other U.S. destination you serve, you charge \$125.00 for a reservation change to a higher class. But at Pago Pago, American Samoa, also a U.S. destination, you charge to \$200.00. This is discrimination."

Governor Togiola also said "at every other U.S. destination you serve, you charge \$80.00 for an excess piece of baggage. But at Pago Pago, American Samoa, also a U.S. destination, you charge \$105.00 per piece. This is discrimination."

"At every other U.S. destination you serve, you allow refunds for full fare tickets. But at Pago Pago, American Samoa, also a U.S. destination, you will not refund any tickets bought in American Samoa, including full fare tickets for Hawaiian flights and further refusing to refund tickets bought in American Samoa for full fare tickets purchased for flights on other airlines but issued on your ticket stock. The differences practiced here is blatant discrimination," wrote Governor Togiola.

"With respect to keeping other airlines' money, which would have been refunded on their own issuing ticket stock, this practice defies a normal sense of honesty in keeping funds not intended for you. You have refused to acknowledge this. Your insistence that such full fare refunds are allowed in Pago Pago, suggests that you may not have full awareness of the airline's operations," said the Governor.

Governor Togiola said on board Hawaiian Air flights between U.S. destinations the airline charges \$10.00 for hand held video screens called DigEplayers in economy class. But on the flight between American Samoa and Honolulu, Hawaiian Air inflight personnel have refused to rent these entertainment devices to economy passengers. The Governor said passengers report that the airlines' inflight personnel have explained that they are not allowed to rent these entertainment devices to passengers on the American Samoan flights.

"They have refused the tender of \$10.00, even when the passengers advise that they have been able to rent these entertainment devices on connecting Hawaiian Airlines flights from the U.S. Mainland to Honolulu. This is discrimination," said Governor Togiola.

The Governor said in his letter that "this was all set forth in our letter to you on May 19, 2006. Your reply to all these complaints on June 2, 2006 is confined to the following statement:

'With respect to the issue of fare rules, refund policies, headset prices, and the like, we have exactly the same approach for our Pago Pago flights as we do for our mainland flights.'

"This is simply devious. We expressed no concern for differences in 'approach.' We talked about differences in the charges themselves. You totally avoid the issue of your fees being higher at Pago Pago than your other U.S. destinations. You pretend that our complaint was a protest with the existence of these type of fees at Pago Pago, and now you must condescend to educate us that these fees are charged at all your U.S. destinations, and therefore we suffer no discrimination in their presence at Pago Pago," added Governor Togiola.

"You stated in your June 2, 2006 letter: 'We have change fees, excess baggage fees, cancellation penalties, and fees for no-shows' on all our mainland routes, just like we do on our Pago Pago services.' You conveniently ignore that we made it clear in our letter that we were quite aware of these fees common to airlines these days, but our objection was to the higher charges for these same fees imposed on just one U.S. destination, Pago Pago, American Samoa," continued Governor Togiola.

"Similarly, with the same deviousness you reply to our objection to the access restrictions your inflight personnel are instructed to impose on our people in their use of entertainment features on Samoa flights. Far from apologizing, you merely state: 'We have the same charges for accessing our in-flight entertainment system on our mainland flights as we do on those to Pago Pago.' Again, this is another tedious attempt at a devious answer. Here the complaint is not about a money charge. The complaint is that you will not allow them to use these devices in the first place; not a price issue. Our people are thus subjected to embarrassment when they ask and are refused," said Governor Togiola.

"So again, you avoid the problem, by restating our concern in terms we never expressed. These small but highly personal acts of discrimination in use of your entertainment systems, are significant in that they appear to spell out a demeaning ethnic attitude that informs the character of other acts of discrimination which you feel free to impose in disfavor to our people," said Governor Togiola.

"Discussion of fares is fraught with opportunities to confuse. Contrary to your assertions, the economy round trip airfares that the majority of our people are paying all year between Pago Pago and Honolulu are between \$1013.00 and \$1147.00, fares available within two weeks of departure," said the Governor. "These airfares are in fact nearly 100% higher than Hawaiian's comparable fares between Hawaii and the West Coast, a similar 10 hour round trip, during high season, and more than 100% higher during the low season for West Coast fares. The higher fares you impose in American Samoa are all year fares with no seasonal opportunities."

Governor Togiola said in American Samoa, these are the fares that are available 13 days before departure which, year around, is the time frame when most of the people of American Samoa are able to come up with these expensive airfares, in a market that cannot accommodate long advanced reservations.

"Currently no near term seats are available on the Pago Pago to Honolulu route, and passengers are forced to a choice of waiting for an opening by purchasing \$1013.00 ticket for some way forward reservation and then when a cancellation becomes available and a reservation change charge is further paid up to \$200.00, then, they can get on the aircraft," said Governor Togiola. "Travel agents are advising that it is better to pay the full fare of \$1147.00 which for some categories of seat reservations cancelled there would not be a further reservation change charged to fill that cancelled seat. So it is a \$1147.00 cost now, as a practical matter, to get an economy seat to Honolulu."

"Hawaiian's current high season fares from the West Coast to Honolulu for seats similarly bought within 13 days of departure, range from a round trip cost of \$486.00 from Phoenix to \$689.00 from San Diego. Thus, the fares charged by Hawaiian on its Honolulu/ Pago Pago route, is almost 100% higher for the same 10 hour round trip flight time as its average fares between West Coast and Honolulu even in high season. In low season, and periods of special fares, the West Coast/Hawaii air fares are significantly lower, showing a greater discrepancy. Hawaiian has no seasonal or special fares in the Samoa market as it provides to its West Coast and other markets," added Governor Togiola.

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Governor Togiola Tulafono asks Hawaiian Air to withdraw from Pago Pago-Honolulu route *(continued from page 3)*

"American Samoa is not a discretionary pleasure market where trips can be planned well in advance to take advantage of the lowest advanced fares. Our travel is need based, for which long reservation time lines are not normally available. This is the working reality that confronts our people when the need to travel arises. These \$1000.00 plus air fares demanded by Hawaiian are the fares we have to deal with. There is no need for this excess. It must come to a halt," continued Governor Togiola.

"In your letter of February 19, 2006, you try to justify the extraordinary high air fares you charge for flights between Pago Pago and Honolulu by claiming that 'the price of fuel is higher in Pago Pago than anywhere else we fly.' We had this claim examined. The question was asked: How much higher is fuel cost in Pago Pago compared to fuel cost at Los Angeles where the comparable airfares to Honolulu are 50% of the Pago Pago airfares going the same distance to the same destination? The answer was about 14 cents higher per gallon higher in Pago Pago, or about \$6.00 added cost per round trip passenger. In your reply you talk about a 34 cent difference in 'base price', but you will not say what your inplane fuel cost is at Los Angeles which is higher than any base price. In Pago Pago, your inplane fuel price is \$2.24 per gallon. Until you disclose your inplane fuel price at Los Angeles, there is no real credibility to your highlighted claim that higher fuel costs are the reason for the higher airfares. Even using your suggestion of 34 cents as an implied difference, such a fuel cost would only add some \$16.00 to a round trip airfare," wrote Governor Togiola.

"In summary, your attempt to use higher fuel costs at Pago Pago as a reason for our high airfares to Honolulu, simply fails. Why you tried to make this an issue, we do not understand, unless you were convinced that we would simply accept your self serving assertions. Our community has learned by experience that your statements of relevant facts on these matters cannot be accepted as straight forward expressions of the operative truth. The confines of crafted language coming from your office claiming contrary facts has to be carefully examined and tested. We have learned to take these rocks to mainland professionals who turn them over and confirm to us what is underneath," said the Governor.

"Similarly, you have tried to make the cost of custom and immigration fees and landing fees, as the justification of your excessive airfares. Again examining these broad assertions in detail, you have only defined an additional \$10.00 to \$15.00 to a single passenger round trip airfare," continued Governor Togiola.

"All of this correspondence started in response to our written inquiry to you in January this year, as to what justification you had for the extraordinary air fares you have imposed on our people entering and departing American Samoa," said Governor Togiola. "You answered on February 16, 2006, stating that the fares were fully justified, and you gave us five reasons. We had those five reasons examined by an extensive number of mainland professionals and executives. The end result, at best, is justification for something under \$40.00 to be added to a Los Angeles to Honolulu airfare, for the comparable airfare between Pago Pago and Honolulu, the same exact distance."

"A \$40.00 add-on to a round trip ticket between Pago Pago and Honolulu: This is now the sum result of your efforts to justify Hawaiian Airlines' exorbitant airfares from American Samoa to Hawaii," said Governor Togiola. "But there is more here than the plundering of our community, and running roughshod over the restraints required by our U.S. AntiTrust Laws in use of monopoly power."

"Equally offensive is the lack of any concern for a decorum of inoffensive conduct in executing personal service. You have offered no hint of any apology for perceived offenses we have reported. As Governor, I am a recipient of many communications expressing the public's resentment of unfortunate encounters with Hawaiian's service," said Governor Togiola.

"I have been given the observation that your not having had prior U.S. airline experience or even a U.S. education, may account for the lack of American cultural and legal sensibilities, that appear to be evident here. An understanding leadership is usually required to cure attitudes that allow inappropriate conduct. There is a fundamental incompatibility here," Governor Togiola wrote Mr. Dunkerley.

"It is clear that you do not understand that our people have reached the point where their tolerance for this abuse is at an end. Instead your only responsive act has been to search for local politicians with hopes for free travel and upgrades to lend a sympathetic ear for your self serving assertions. These are good people but who would have no external staff to warn them of the machinations addressed to them," said Governor Togiola.

The Governor reiterated the unhappiness of American Samoans over the way Hawaiian Air has conducted itself in recent years and has forced a major confrontation to accomplish any change.

Governor Togiola included in his letter to the CEO & President of Hawaiian Airlines a recent letter to the editor, excerpted from Samoa News – June 12, 2006:

Dear Editor,

I agree and I am very grateful that the governor is drawing the line with Hawaiian Air. When I read the article about the Governor's response to Hawaiian Airlines, I almost cried. I felt so proud that our leader is stepping up and calling the shots (so to speak).

This unfair treatment has gone on far too long. It's made it difficult for us in the military to make trips home due to the outrageous fares and ridiculous fees. I always hear about the unfair treatment of our local passengers, but I never had the opportunity to experience this firsthand, until my recent trip home for R&R from Iraq.

When I boarded the plane, I was in civilian clothes. Throughout the trip I noticed that the stewardesses were not very friendly with the passengers around me. They would make faces to each other as they came around to serve the meals and beverages. When they came to ask me for my preference of meal, they made no attempt to hide their true feelings. For it showed in their faces their disgust for Lord knows what. I particularly didn't like how one of the stewardess was treating an elderly Samoan couple two rows in front of me. As we got closer to American Samoa, I changed into my military uniform. It wasn't until I was in uniform that I received decent treatment or hospitality rather.

It was then that I knew these people are prejudiced, they discriminate against Samoans, and are just flat out mean. I support the Governor in how he is handling this matter. He has my 110% support behind him. It's about time someone does something about this madness. Our people have suffered for way too long. Thank You."

The Governor said he is strong in his conviction of making the necessary and much-deserved change of a lower cost air service for the Territory.

"We are prepared to do this. This is a road upon which there is no retreat," wrote Governor Togiola.

ASG RADIO PROGRAM

***With:* Governor Togiola Tulafono**

Saturdays @ 7a.m.

***On:* Showers of Blessings-FM
104.7**

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